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RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2328  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BISHKEK 000597

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [KG](#)

SUBJECT: KYRGYZ POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT OUTLINED FOR VISITING  
INR ANALYST

REF: BISHKEK 405

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Classified By: CDA Lee Litzenberger for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: During meetings with a visiting INR analyst, opposition members, journalists, and former government officials presented a negative assessment of Kyrgyzstan's democratic development. Interlocutors highlighted the increasing control of President Bakiyev and his family over politics, the economy, and the security services. They also pointed to the growing role of Kazakhstan, particularly in banking and the energy sector. Most felt that President Bakiyev's consolidation of power had brought short-term political stability, which could allow for reforms to improve the business climate, but they also worried that this stability would last only as long as Bakiyev kept his allies satisfied and the opposition at bay. End Summary.

Stability, for a Price  
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¶2. (C) Meetings held May 15-19 with opposition members, journalists, and former government officials confirmed for visiting Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) Analyst David Abramson that President Bakiyev's consolidation of power has created short-term stability, but damaged long-term prospects for successful democratic development. Commentators believed it was possible that Bakiyev was acting to control parliament and the government in order to create the stability necessary to attract investment, particularly in Kyrgyzstan's dilapidated energy sector.

¶3. (C) Referring to Kazakh President Nazarbayev's April 2007 public criticism of Kyrgyz political and economic instability, interlocutors speculated that stability could lead to greater Kazakh investment. They felt that the Kyrgyz parliament's recent ratification of the controversial 2001 land-swap agreement with Kazakhstan (reftel) would demonstrate to the Kazakhs -- and to Nazarbayev -- that Bakiyev had the domestic political situation under control.

14. (C) Center for Political and Legal Research Director Tamerlan Ibraimov noted that Kazakh enterprises already had a large presence in Kyrgyzstan, with additional investment in construction likely. Opposition Ata Meken party member Cholpon Jakupova agreed that Kazakh firms played a large role in the Kyrgyz economy, and she speculated that Kyrgyz-born Kazakh citizen Alexander Mashkevich would be the main investor in privatized Kyrgyz electricity firms. Jakupova also suggested that Nazarbayev himself has been orchestrating Kyrgyz politics, for example by urging ex-Kyrgyz PM Atambayev to visit Bakiyev in the hospital in Germany in March in order to dispel potentially destabilizing rumors about Bakiyev's health.

#### Bakiyev's Family Feud

15. (C) Commentators also focused on the role of the Bakiyev family in Kyrgyzstan's economy and security services. They outlined the commonly held views about the Bakiyev family divisions of interests. They noted that Bakiyev's brother, Janysh, appears to be in charge of the country's security apparatus (Janysh has since been appointed Chief of the State Presidential Security Service), while Bakiyev's son, Maksim, has numerous business ventures, and their interests occasionally collide. According to Tamerlan Ibraimov, Janysh and Maxim have amassed considerable wealth and alliances, and are inclined to use their respective powers to maintain the status quo. That spells difficulty for anyone who attempts to do business here, said Ibraimov.

#### Parliamentary Factions' Factions

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16. (C) American University of Central Asia lecturer and former Institute for Public Policy member Shairbek Jurayev noted that, although the pro-presidential Ak Jol party dominated parliament, the legislature was far from monolithic. He said that tri-partisan sub-groups, or "factions," have formed based on geographic, gender, and other personal ties. Jurayev pointed to three main groups, apparently headed by then-Ak Jol party leader Elmira Ibraimova (she has since been appointed Vice Prime Minister), then-Speaker Madumarov (he has since resigned as Speaker), and Vice Speaker Cholpon Bayekova, which are able to use their varying levels of political influence to push forward certain initiatives. Online news site "24.kg" reporter Asel Otorbayeva concurred, adding that the presence of inexperienced politicians in parliament could enable manipulation by those leading such factions. Otorbayeva also singled-out Presidential Chief of Staff Medet Sadyrkulov as an extra-parliamentary manipulator, one who had already proven to be a political mastermind.

#### Comment

17. (C) These meetings confirmed observations on the possible reasons behind Bakiyev's consolidation of power, and the potential impact such moves will have on Kyrgyzstan's democratic development. The issue of infighting within the Bakiyev family, and parliament, highlights the fractures on which Kyrgyzstan's short-term political stability stands. While negative regarding Bakiyev's tactics, most predicted that his "controlled stability" would last as long as the president's allies remained satisfied politically and economically, and his foes kept disunited and powerless.

18. (U) INR Analyst David Abramson has cleared this cable.

LITZENBERGER